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ALPHABETS

A MANUAL OF LETTER DESIGN, WITH COMPLETE ALPHABETS OF VARIED STYLES OF LETTERING

BY

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Editor of Ars Typographica

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By Douglas C. McMurtrie

ALPHABETS

LETTERING may be classified in two main divisions: Gothic and Roman. With the former Anglo-Saxons are not much concerned as its present-day use is largely restricted to Germany. The only example shown in the present volume is on pages 58 and 59 and is generally — though incorrectly — known as Old English.

The Roman alphabet is by far the more legible and it has been adopted as the standard in practically all civilized countries throughout the world. The form in which we use it was largely determined by the stone-cut capitals in ancient Roman architecture and the handwriting of the humanistic scribes in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

Letter shapes have been so fixed by tradition that they can vary but slightly and still remain

legible. Eccentric departures from standard form and the addition of unnecessary features is unsound practice. Within limits of the traditional forms there is possible, however, endless variation in comparative weights of the thick and thin strokes, in the general blackness of the whole alphabet, in the form of the serifs, and so forth. This will be clearly demonstrated in the following pages.

A variety of the Roman alphabet is the italic or slanting form. This is always quite similar in style to the upright alphabet it is designed to accompany.

Variety in lettering can be obtained by drawing alphabets in outline or giving them perspective by the introduction of a white line in the heavy strokes of the letters. This white space may be left white or grayed by five parallel strokes or cross-hatching.

A more or less special form of alphabet is script—an imitation of actual handwriting of more or less elegant character. Two of the best forms of script are shown on pages 60-61 and 62-63.

The order in which the specimen alphabets are arranged is (1) Roman alphabets of nor-

mal weight with corresponding italics, (2) Roman alphabets of heavy weight, some with italics, (3) Outline or shaded alphabets, (4) a Gothic alphabet, (5) two Script alphabets. The designation by which the design is known will be found at the bottom of each page.

This is intended, of course, as an elementary handbook only, but almost all the good forms of letter design are represented, and the specimen alphabets should prove useful models to students of lettering.

a b c d e f

g h i j k l

m n o p q r

s t u v w x

y z 1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8 9 0

Caslon

A B C D E

F G H I J

K L M N

O P Q R S

T U V W

X Y Z & ? !

a b c d e f

g h i j k l

m n o p q r

s t u v w x

y z 1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8 9 0

Caslon Italic

A B C D E

F G H I J

K L M N

O P Q R S

T U V W

X Y Z & ? !

a b c d e f

g h i j k l

m n o p q r

s t u v w x

y z 1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8 9 0

Garamond

A B C D E

F G H I J

K L M N

O P Q R S

T U V W X

Y Z & ? !

a b c d e f

g h i j k l

m n o p q r

s t u v w x

y z 1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8 9 0

Garamond Italic

A B C D E

F G H I J

K L M N

O P Q R S

T U V W X

Y Z & ? !

a b c d e f

g h i k l

m n o p q

r s t u v w

x y z 1 2 3

4 5 6 7 8 9 0

A B C D

E F G H I

J K L M N

O P Q R S

T U V W

X Y Z &

a b c d e f

g h i j k l

m n o p q r

s t u v w x

y z 1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8 9 0

Astrée

A B C D E

F G H I J

K L M N

O P Q R S

T U V W

X Y Z & ? !

a b c d e f

g h i j k l

m n o p q r

s t u v w x

y z 1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8 9 0

Astrée Italic

A B C D E

F G H I J

K L M N

O P Q R S

T U V W

X Y Z & ? !

Astrée Italic

a b c d e f

g h i j k l

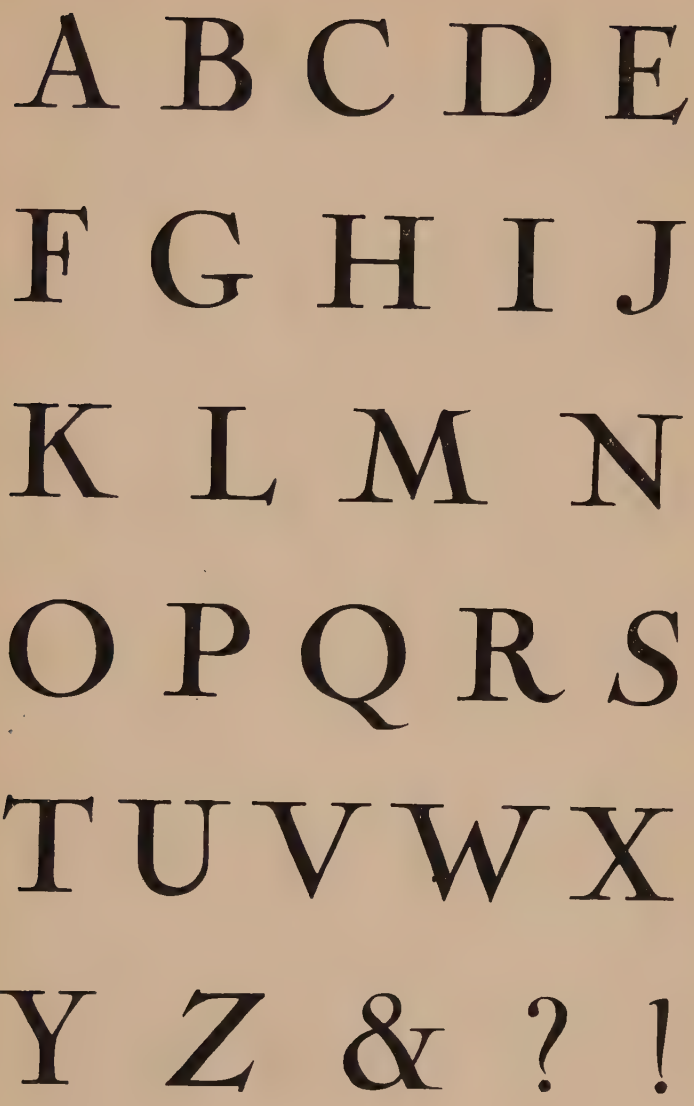
m n o p q r

s t u v w x

y z 1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8 9 0

Nicolas Cochin



Nicolas Cochin

a b c d e f

g h i j k l

m n o p q r

s t u v w x

y z 1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8 9 0

Nicolas Cochin Italic

A B C D E

F G H I J

K L M N

O P Q R S

T U V W X

Y Z & ? !

Nicolas Cochin Italic

A B C D E

F G H I J

K L M N

O P Q R S

T U V W

X Y Z &

A B C D E

F G H I J

K L M N

O P Q R

S T U V W

X Y Z & ? !

a b c d e f

g h i j k l

m n o p q r

s t u v w x

y z 1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8 9 0

Bodoni

A B C D E

F G H I J

K L M N

O P Q R S

T U V W X

Y Z & ? !

a b c d e f

g h i j k l

m n o p q r

s t u v w x

y z 1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8 9 0

Bodoni Italic

A B C D E

F G H I J

K L M N

O P Q R S

T U V W X

Y Z & ? !

Bodoni Italic

a b c d e f

g h i j k l

m n o p q r

s t u v w x

y z 1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8 9 0

Goudy Bold

A B C D E

F G H I J

K L M N

O P Q R S

T U V W

X Y Z & ? !

Goudy Bold

a b c d e f

g h i j k l

m n o p q r

s t u v w x

y z 1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8 9 0

Goudy Bold Italic [32]

A B C D E

F G H I J

K L M N

O P Q R S

T U V W

X Y Z & ? !

Goudy Bold Italic

a b c d e f

g h i j k l

m n o p q r

s t u v w x

y z 1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8 9 0

Caslon Bold

A B C D E

F G H I J

K L M N

O P Q R S

T U V W X

Y Z & ? !

Caslon Bold

a b c d e f

g h i j k l

m n o p q r

s t u v w x

y z 1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8 9 0

Caslon Bold Italic

A B C D E

F G H I J

K L M N

O P Q R S

T U V W X

Y Z & ? !

Caslon Bold Italic

a b c d e f

g h i j k l

m n o p q r

s t u v w x

y z 1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8 9 0

Greco Heavy

A B C D

E F G H

I J K L

M N O P

Q R S T

U V W X

Y Z & ? !

a b c d e f

g h i j k

l m n o p

q r s t u

v w x y z

1 2 3 4 5

6 7 8 9 0

Greco Bold

A B C D

E F G H

I J K L

M N O P

Q R S T

U V W X

Y Z & ? !

Greco Bold

a b c d e f

g h i j k l

m n o p q r

s t u v w x

y z 1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8 9 0

Bodoni Bold

A B C D E

F G H I J

K L M N

O P Q R S

T U V W X

Y Z & ? !

Bodoni Bold

a b c d e f

g h i j k l

m n o p q r

s t u v w x

y z 1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8 9 0

Bodoni Bold Italic

A B C D E

F G H I J

K L M N

O P Q R S

T U V W X

Y Z & ? !

Bodoni Bold Italic

abcdefg

hijklm

nopqrs

tuvwx

yz1234

567890

Cooper Black

A B C D E

F G H I J

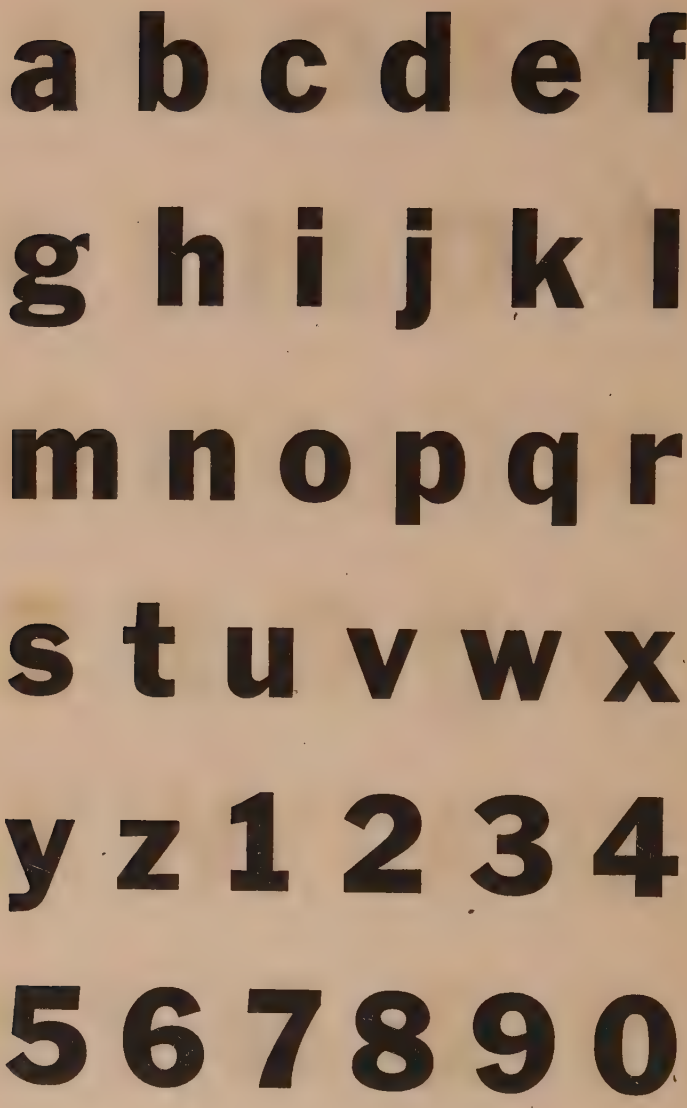
K L M N O

P Q R S T

U V W X

Y Z & ? !

Cooper Black



Franklin Gothic

A B C D E

F G H I J

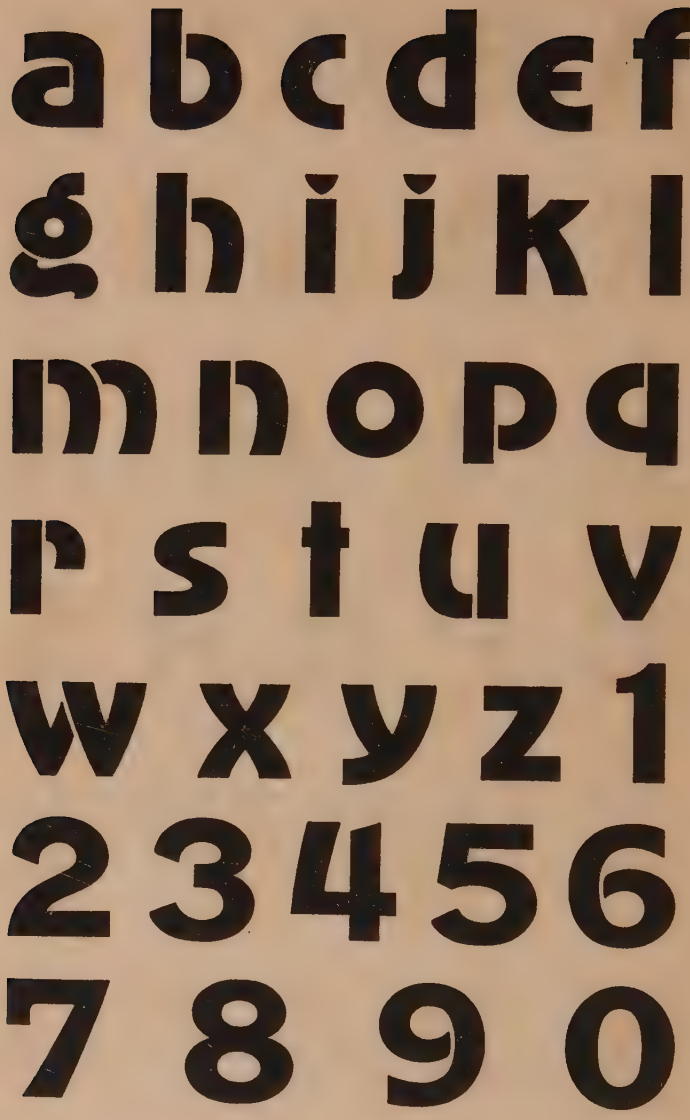
K L M N

O P Q R S

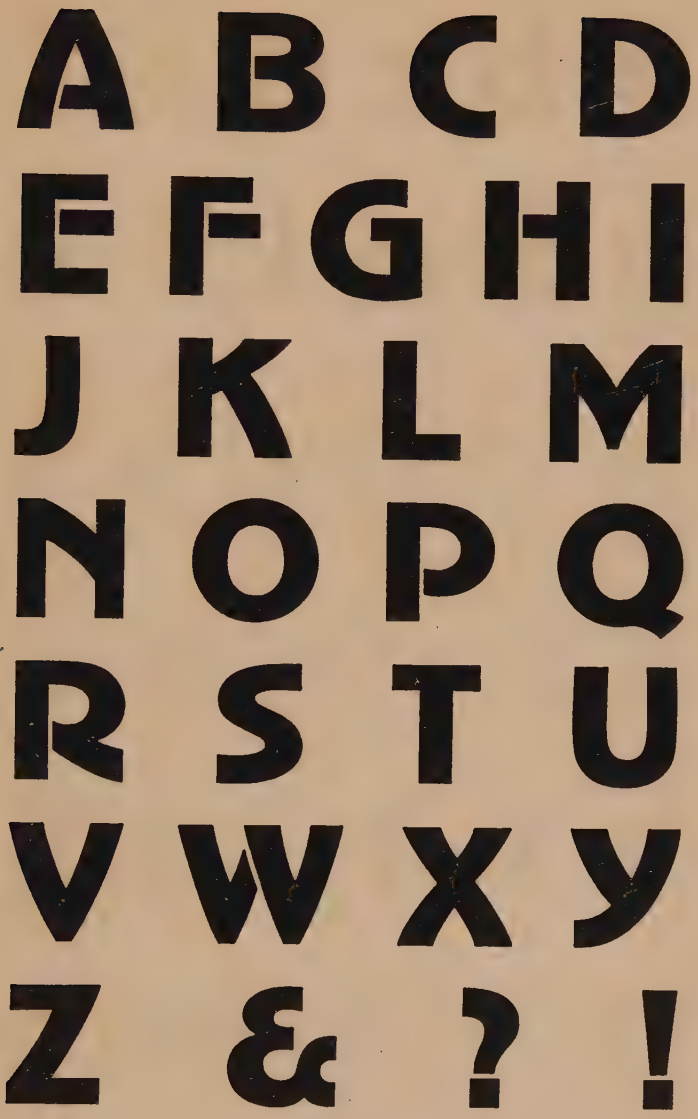
T U V W X

Y Z & ? !

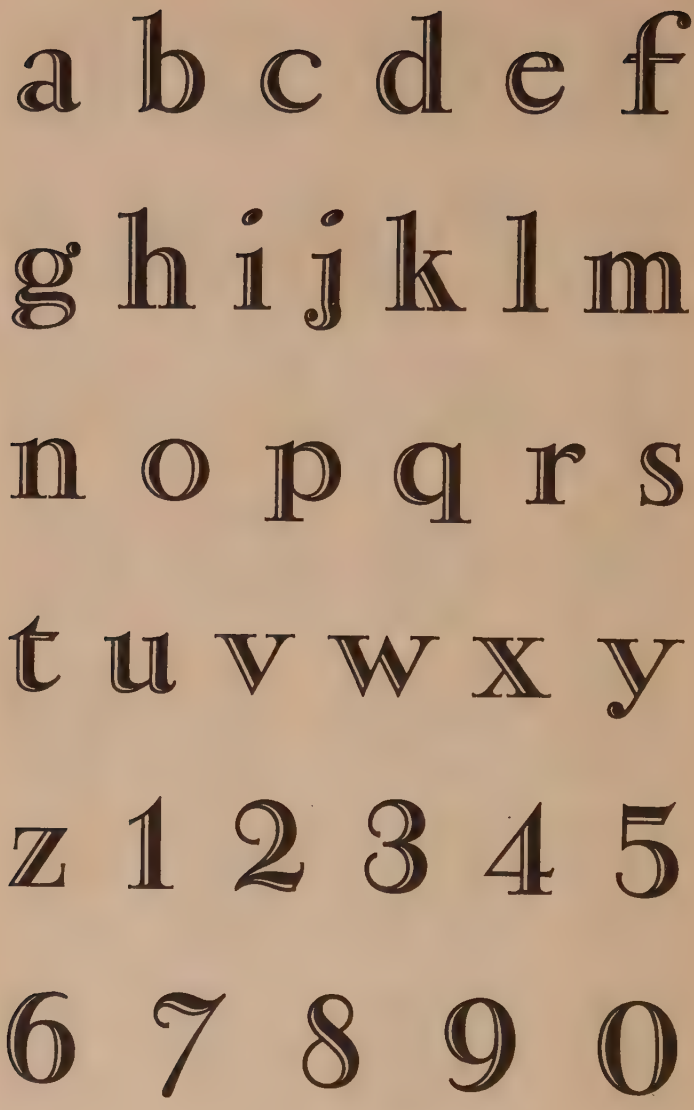
Franklin Gothic



Advertisers' Gothic



Advertisers' Gothic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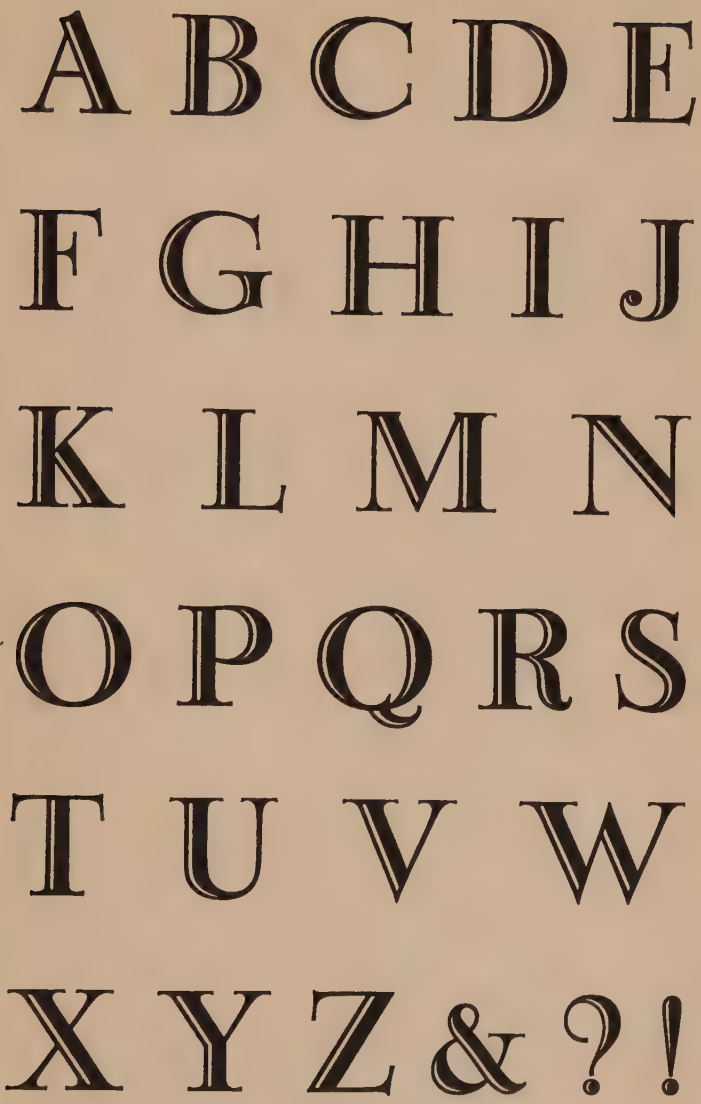
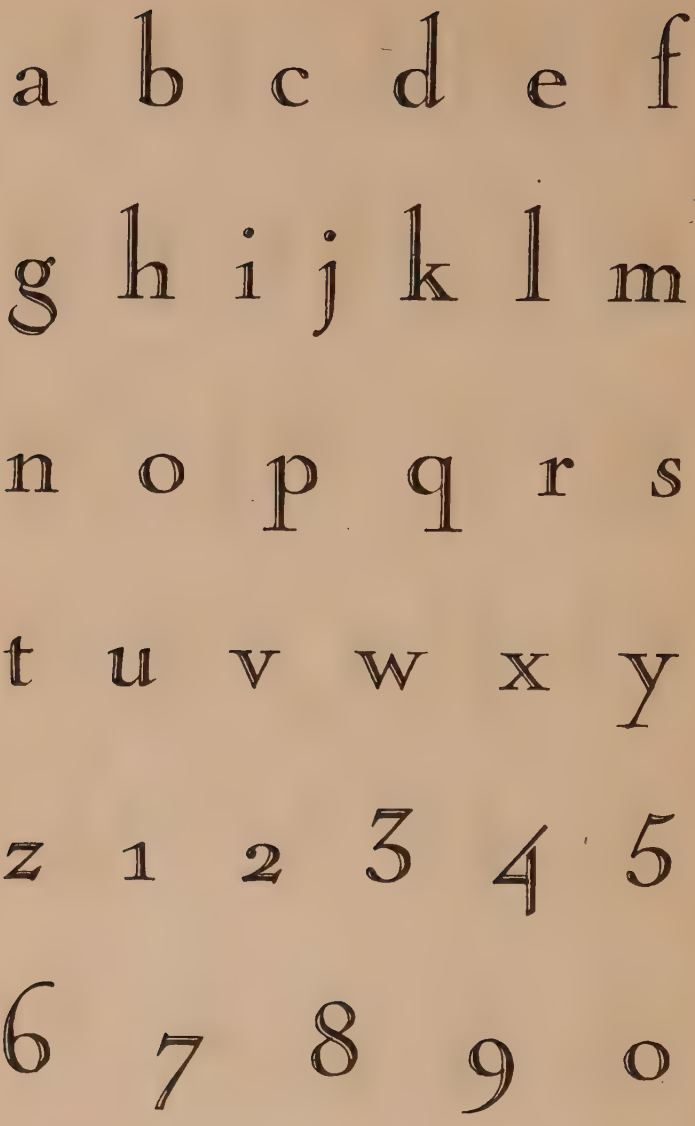
g h i j k l m
n o p q r s
t u v w x y
z 1 2 3 4 5
6 7 8 9 0


A B C D E
F G H I J
K L M N
O P Q R S
T U V W
X Y Z & ? !


a b c d e f
g h i j k l m
n o p q r s
t u v w x y
z 1 2 3 4 5
6 7 8 9 0

A B C D E

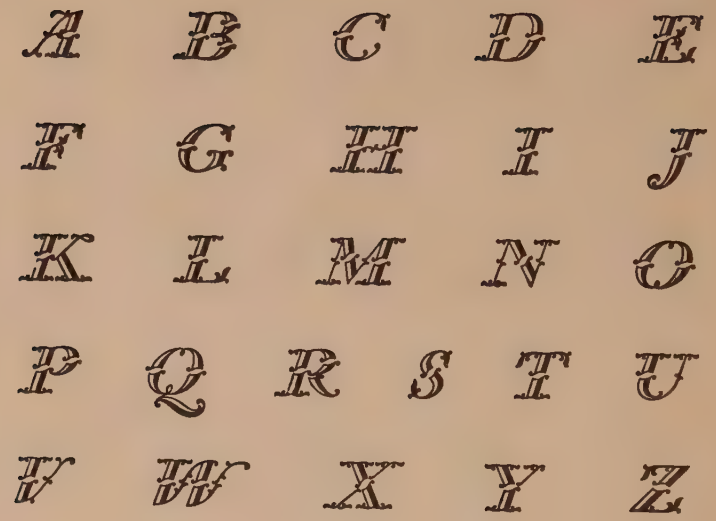
F G H I J

K L M N

O P Q R S

T U V W

X Y Z & ? !



A B C D E F
G H I J K L
M N O P Q
R S T U V W
X Y Z & ? !

A B C D E

F G H I J

K L M N O

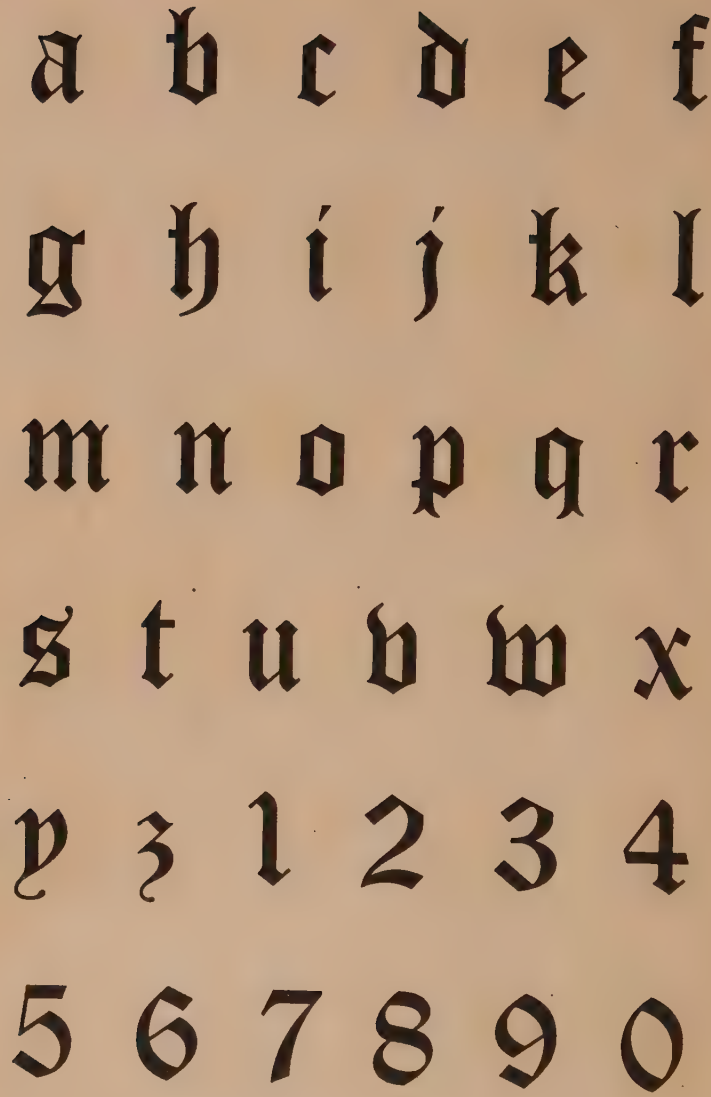
P Q R S T U

V W X Y Z

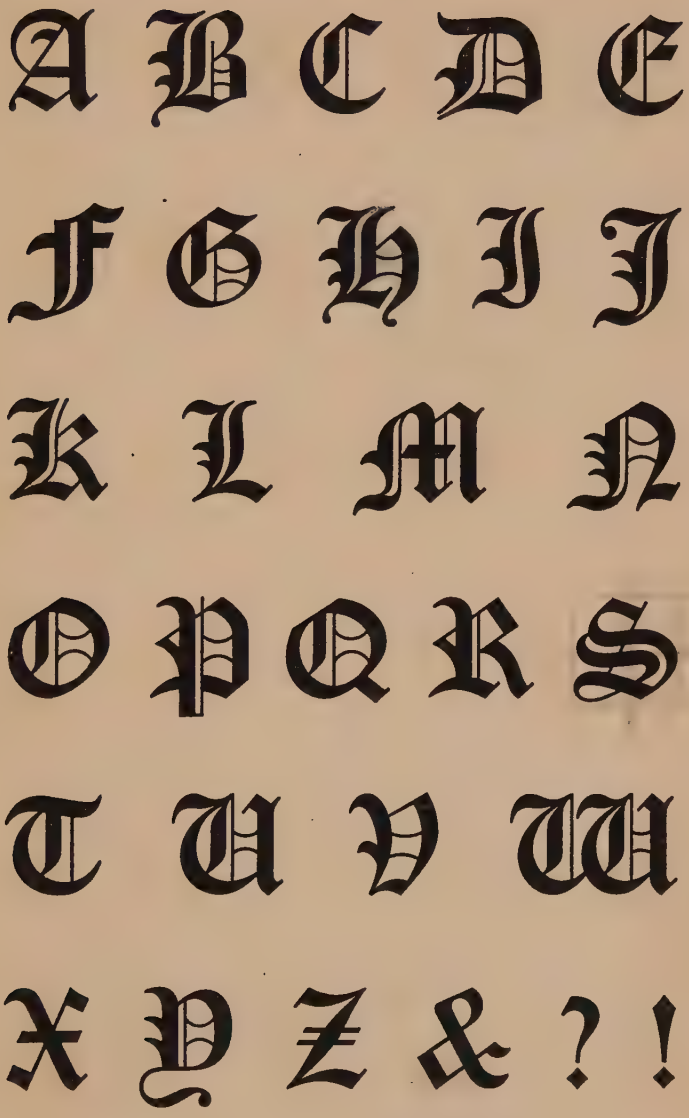
1 2 3 4 5 6

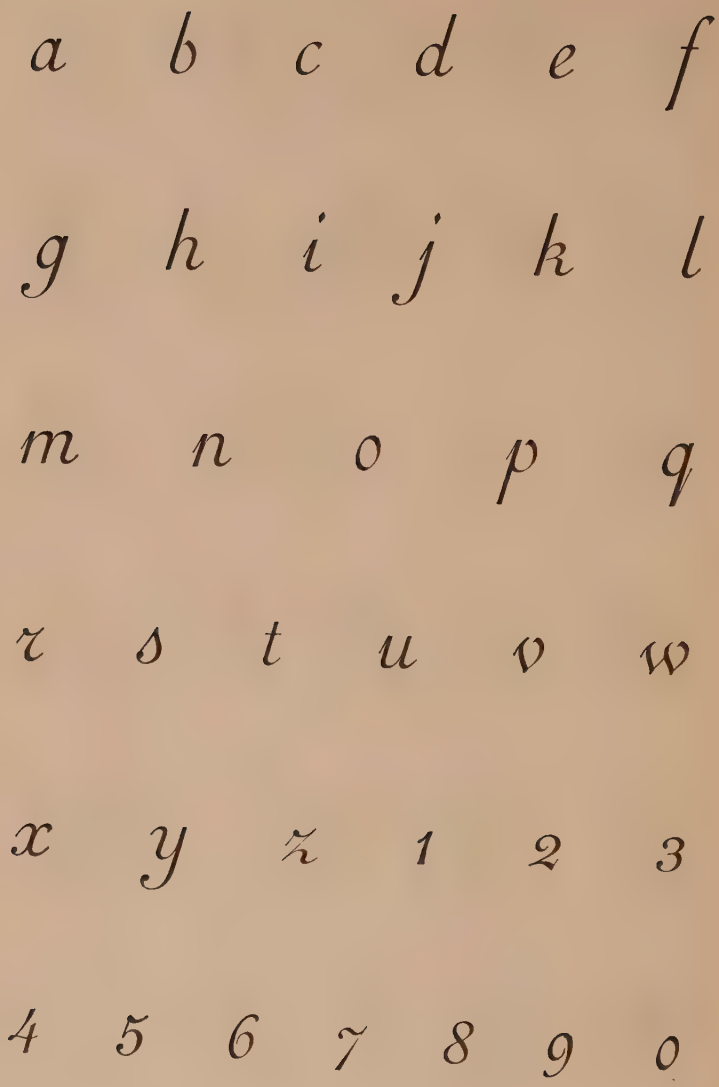
7 8 9 0 ? !

McMurtrie Title

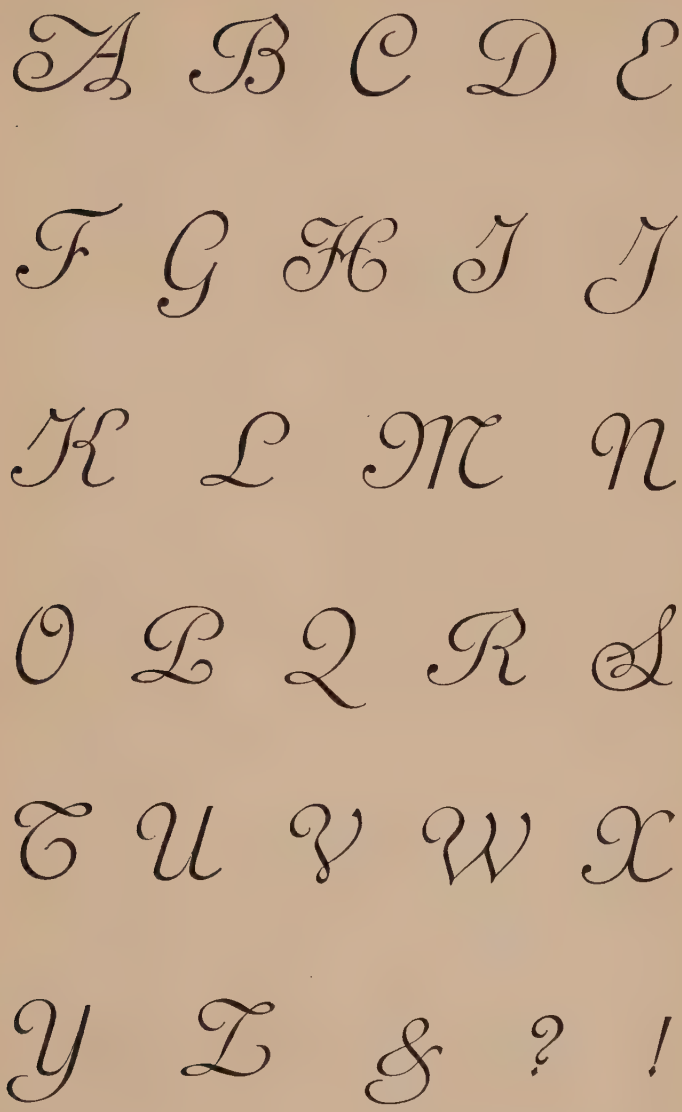


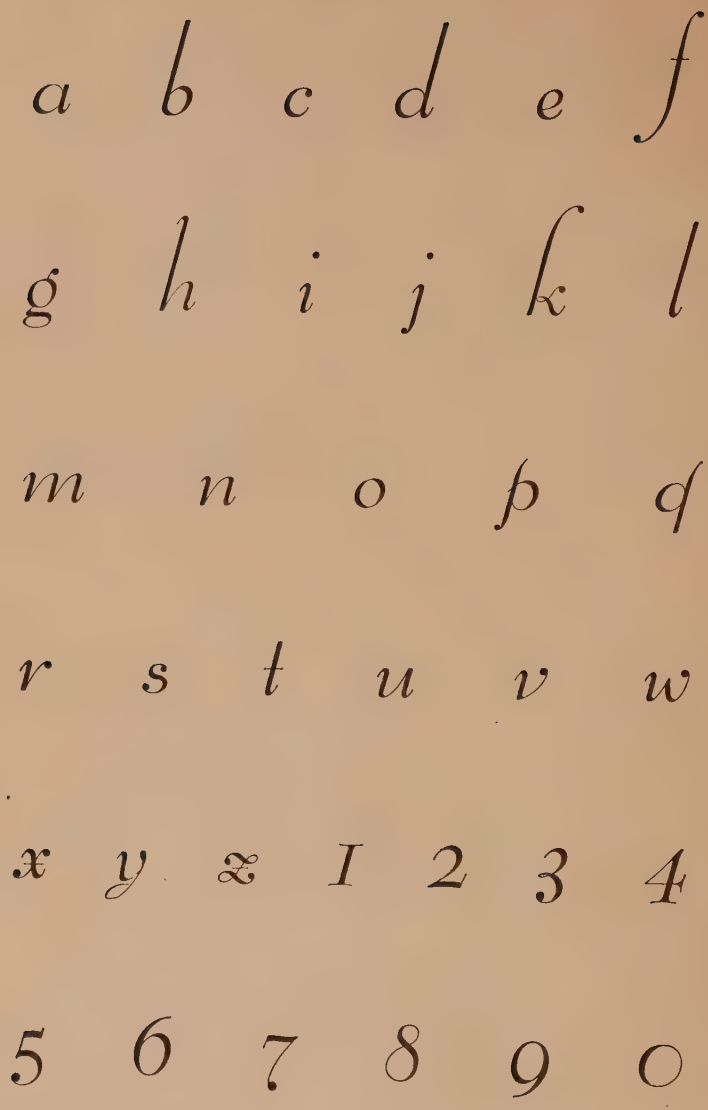
Cloister Black


A B C D E
F G H I J
K L M N
O P Q R S
T U V W
X Y Z & ? !

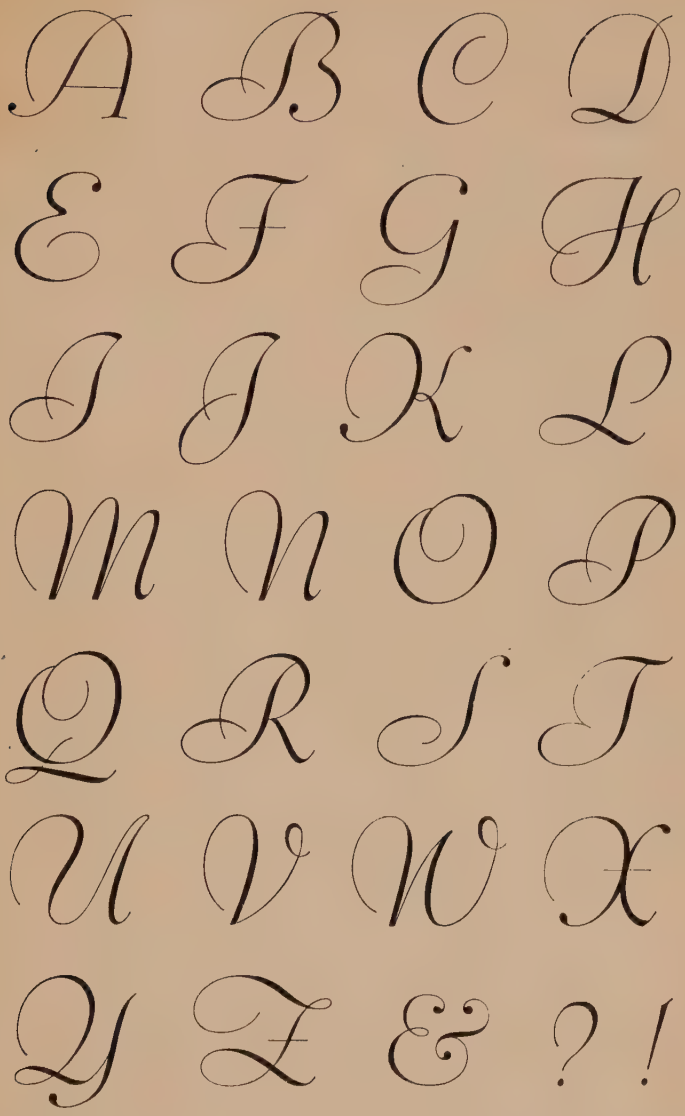


French Script





Bernhard Cursive



INDEX

	PAGES
Advertisers' Gothic	50–51
Astrée	16–19
Bernhard Cursive	62–63
Bodoni	26–29
Bodoni Bold	42–45
Caslon	6– 9
Caslon Bold	34–37
Cloister Black	58–59
Cooper Black	46–47
Forum Title	24
Franklin Gothic	48–49
French Script	60–61
Garamond	10–13
Goudy Bold	30–33
Greco Adornado	56
Greco Heavy	38–39
Greco Bold	40–41
Inkunabula	25
Kennerley	14–15
Mercure	54–55
McMurtrie Title	57
Narcissus	52–53
Nicolas Cochin	20–23
Vanity Fair	56

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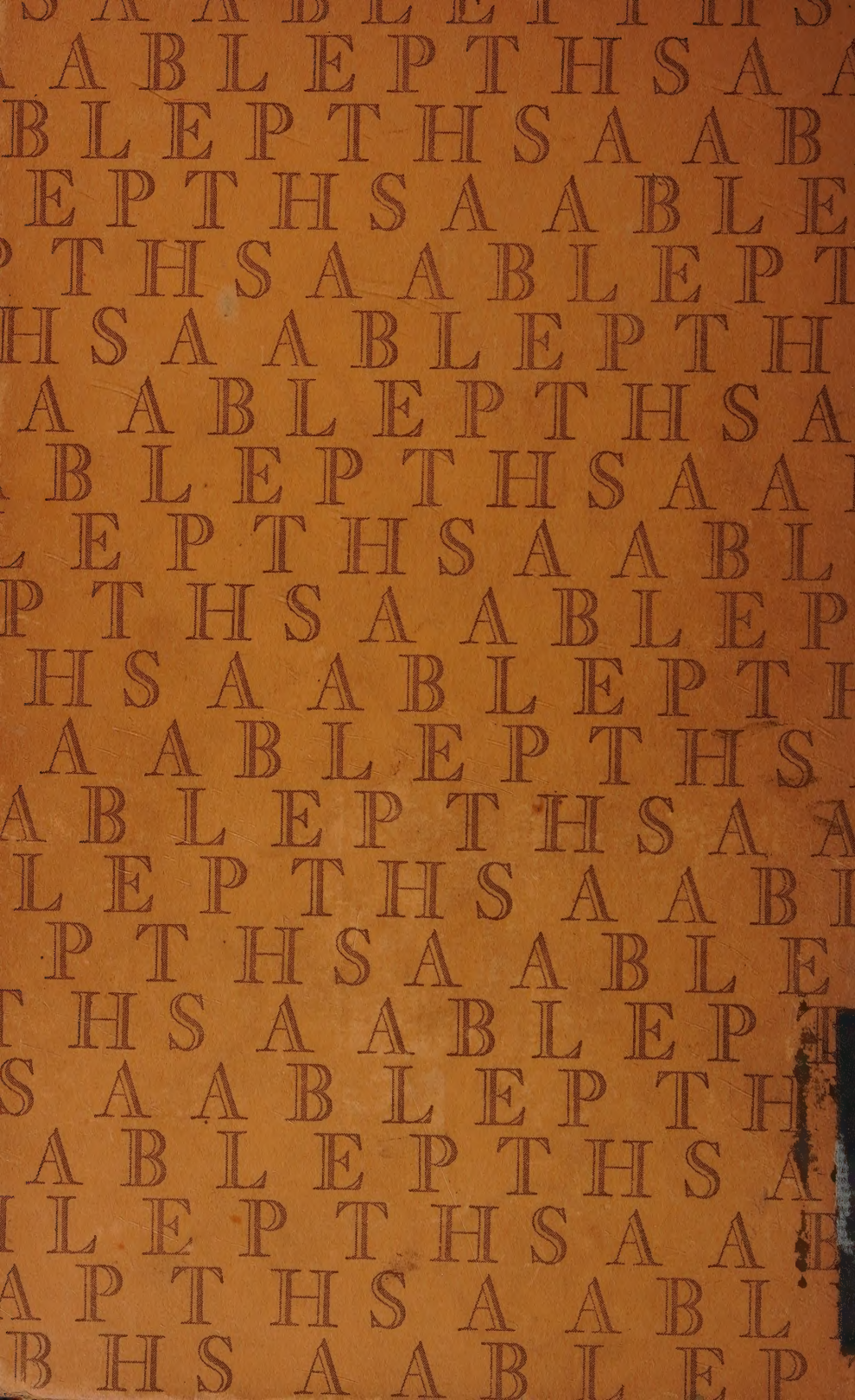
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